23.02 km. length is already four-laned and the work of four-laning is in progress in about 29.89 km. The balance length is two-lane. However, tenders for four-laning, for the stretch from km. 249/4 to 259/4, have been invited as well as accepted by the Government of Gujarat.

Further, the following works of 4-laning have been sanctioned to be financed from the World Bank loan assistance programme in respect of the chainages of N.H.No. 8 in Maharashtra from km. 381/600 to 502/370 (from Gujarat border to Mumbai).

(a) from km. 439/0 to 477/0 .....Rs. 6151.95 lakhs.

(b) from km. 477/0 to 497/0 .....Rs. 3100.63 lakhs.

Thus, for four-laning of 58 km. of road between Bassein Creek to Manor of N.H. 8 in Maharashtra which includes the construction of five major bridges/ one R.U.B. (Rail under Bridge) at an estimated cost of Rs. 115 crores, tenders have been evaluated and posed to World Bank for their approval. In respect of km. 497/0 to 498/900, the four laning works costing Rs. 446.93 lakhs have been sanctioned on 29.3.96 and tenders have been accepted on 6.2.97.

In respect of the road segment from Valsad (km. 333.8) to Manor (at km. 439.0), the four-laning works have been entrusted to N.H.A.I. (National Highways Authority of India) who have initiated feasibility studies and detailed project preparation.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Unprovoked firing by Pakistani troops along Siachen Glacier

*353. SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM:
SHRI S. NIRAIKULATHAN:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that provocation by Pakistani troops along Siachen glacier border in Jammu and Kashmir has been increasing alarmingly in the recent times;

(b) if so, the action Government have taken to counter this move;

(c) whether Indian side has suffered any casualty because of such firing; and

(d) whether this matter has been taken up with the Pakistani authorities?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV): (a) to (d) Unprovoked intermittent firing including heavy weapons like artillery and mortars by the Pakistani troops across the Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL) in Siachen Sector is a regular phenomenon. There has been no appreciable change in the pattern of firing in 1996 as compared to the previous years. Whenever tactically desirable, appropriate and adequate measures are taken by the Army to counter Pakistani firing. The response is a measured one and the endeavour is to keep the incidents localised. There have been a few casualties amongst Indian troops. Major incidents of Pakistani firing and consequent escalation of tension in Siachen Sector are discussed during weekly telephonic conversation of DGMOs of the two countries whenever considered necessary.

Switching over to the Old Names of Mumbai and Chennai

*354. DR. MOHAN BABU:
SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to switch over to the old names of Mumbai and Chennai; and

(b) if so, the details therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.